

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE LOBBYING

Be from the District. Legislators need to hear from the voters who voted them into office – and can vote them out of office.

Be welcoming. Introduce yourself and ask the legislator to tell you something about themselves and/or why they chose to run for office. If there are issues that s/he has handled well, thank him or her for support on those issues. Please do not be disappointed if your legislator is unavailable to meet with you – this is a very busy time late in the session. It is likely that most members of the legislature are in caucus or on the floor taking action on bills.

Be informed. Know the background of the bill you wish to discuss. Leave information/briefing materials with the legislator to review and remind him or her of your visit. Up-to-date bill information is available at www.leg.wa.gov.

Be polite. Try to find common ground between you and your legislator. While they are there to listen to you, remember to listen to what they have to say to you as a constituent.

Be specific. What do you want them to do? Be as specific as you can. Try to focus in on one or two main issues.

Follow up. If you need a response, ask: “when can I get back to you for an answer?” Be sure to leave your name, address, phone number and/or email address with the legislator and his or her staff. Inquire if he or she would rather be contacted by phone or by email. Be sure to call or email again if you need a response.

If your legislator is not available. Talk to the legislative aide. They are knowledgeable and are in contact with your legislator daily. Leave information about the reason for your visit and leave your contact information. Take the legislative aide and the legislator’s business cards with you – it is handy for contacting the office again.

After your visit. If you wish to be in touch with your legislator, call him or her directly or call the Legislative Hotline at 800-562-6000.